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/2612-4 August 53

Noted by <i>9</i> DD/I
<i>AUG 6</i> 1953

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EAST GERMAN ACTION AGAINST THE WESTERN FOOD PROGRAM

Outline:

- I. Initially (20 July) East German press hinted that sector borders might be closed.
 - a. The Western food program was condemned as inimical to German unity.
- II. East German government subsequently took following steps on 1 August:
 - a. Soviet zone rail travel to Berlin banned.
 - b. East Berlin "food program" instituted for West Berlin unemployed, repeated on 3 August.
- III. Hostile popular reaction to repressive measures on 2 August.
 - a. East German police and food seekers clashed at railway stations at Berlin, Nauen, Halle, Koenigswusterhausen, Babelsberg, Neustrelitz, Oranienburg and Leipzig.
 - (1) Police were overpowered and buildings burned in Chemnitz.

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(2) Police fired on people in Potsdam and Cottbus railroad stations.

(3) Mass march on Berlin of Leuna and Buna workers broken up by East German police.

IV. Soviet military forces on alert - perhaps in anticipation of disorders.

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a. 

b. 2 August report that Soviet tanks and troops massing in trouble areas.

V. Restrictions hamper food program.

a. Only ^{90,000}~~50,000~~ packages distributed on 2 August as compared with 203,219 on 1 August and 260,000 on 31 July.

b. Total distribution since 27 July, 1,350,000 packages.

VI. Further developments of 2 August:

a. Highways leading to Berlin reportedly blockaded.

b. Confiscation of food packages at railway stations.

c. Soviet zone residents reportedly hiding in East Berlin because of blockade.

VII. Current situation

- a. Food centers continue issue of packages on 3 August.
- b. Movement of population in Soviet sector reported normal.
- c. Travel bans apparently still in effect.

(1) However, Potsdam railway station sold tickets to

Berlin on 3 August.

- d. Workers may be returning to normal occupations.

(1) Work stoppages and strikes reported, but no
confirmation.

(2) If there are work stoppages or disorders, further
repressive measures would be necessary.

VIII. East German propaganda against the program.

- a. Claims West is organizing "provocations" against workers.
- b. Food distribution described as attempt to enlist spies
against East Germany.
- c. Food shortages and hunger in West Berlin pointed up, also
food shipments from Soviet Union to East Germany.

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(1) Reliably reported, however, no increase in shipments
from Russia.

d. People warned by Communist press and radio not to transfer
identification cards.

(1) Individuals had been getting several food packages
at once.

e. Claim that US dumping rotten food from West Berlin reserves.

IX. Population aroused and bitter over East German measures.

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